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With regard to the matter of the book, I cannot speak very favorably. Most of what the author says is unobjectionable, but some of it is hardly appropriate to an introductory work, and the omissions are very serious. The substance of the work, in fact, consists mainly of the psychological fads of the last quarter-century. After a brief introductory chapter we are treated to an account of the nervous system, and then come reflex action, sensation, 'reaction,' etc., but very little about mental life. The subject of judgment is indeed touched upon, but only touched, and no one who got his knowledge of it from this book would imagine that it was the leading form of intellectual activity. As for reasoning, inductive or deductive, the author seems to have forgotten that there is such a thing. The moral nature, too, is very insufficiently treated, neither the nature of morality nor the moral sentiments being described. There is, indeed, a peculiarly hazy chapter on the freedom of the will, and there are some good remarks on the formation of useful habits. Dr. Thorndike seems to me to exaggerate the power of education in the moral life, for he thinks that "truth-telling, diligence, attentiveness, integrity, unselfishness, charity, and the like are all probably characteristics acquired after birth. Speaking broadly, *civilization*, including morality, is in each human being an acquisition, not an inherited trait" (p. 186). Now it is true that habits, whether good or bad, are acquired after birth; but surely each person inherits a certain disposition, which has a great influence in deciding what habits he will form.

Dr. Thorndike accepts Professor James's theory of the emotions, which is too well known to the readers of this REVIEW to require comment. Of course, hypnotism and suggestion come in for treatment, and are fairly well described. One of the most disagreeable things in the book is the constant repetition of the term 'reaction' as applied to all the activities of the mind. The term as used of late by psychologists has a quite different meaning from that given it by Newton, when he stated the law that action and reaction are always in opposite directions. Moreover, in the new sense of the word every event in the universe is a 'reaction,' and the only 'actions' in the whole world of being are those of the First Cause. Some other points in Dr. Thorndike's work might call for remark if space permitted; but I have said enough to show its general character, and both its merits and its defects.

JAMES B. PETERSON.

Nouvelles recherches sur l'esthétique et la morale. Par J.-P. DURAND (de Gros). Paris, Félix Alcan, 1900.—p. 275.

This book, written a third of a century ago, and its author, have much of human as well as scientific interest. The warmer interest is aroused, not alone by the recent death of the author, on November 17, 1900, nor wholly by the contrast between the attention his biological and philosophical writings now receive, and their comparative neglect at the time of

their publication, but by these facts in conjunction with the patriotic purpose apparent on every page.

In France, thinks the author, "the confusion, the breakdown (*la débâcle*) of opinion on the question of the beautiful and the good . . . verges already on the last limits," and threatens "a speedy catastrophe, fatal (*suprême*) at once from the spiritual and from the material point of view" (p. 2). Positivism, even when aided by "struggle-for-lifism," cannot avert this fate; and eclecticism is equally impotent. The Roman Church might succeed, but would demand in return the sacrifice of all rights of reason. Nor can the Latins accept inconsequent Protestantism, "*cette religion bâtarde, hétéroclite mixture de raison rebelle et de foi obéissante*," though it has furnished the Germanic peoples with "an accepted and undisputed morality, which has firmly maintained among them the social bond, while leaving his free initiative to the individual" (p. 10). "For us I see but one serious chance of reascending the current that draws us towards the abyss; I see it in a truly and largely scientific solution of the religious problem, of the moral problem, and of the social problem" (p. 12). It is thus in the hope of providing a sound and scientific treatment of esthetic and moral problems, at least in foundation and skeleton outline, that the author has at length published a book written so long ago.

The book indeed is, and is intended to be, suggestive rather than conclusive. The author proposes a method of inquiry, which, he is convinced, will, if carried out, place esthetics and ethics on a solid foundation. This method he does not himself apply, chiefly because of our ignorance of large numbers of necessary facts, but he explains his views with incidental introduction of much interesting matter, and argues against a number of well-known theories inconsistent with his own.

M. Durand begins by pointing out that we have direct experience only of sensations and sentiments (*sentiments*), the ground facts, and of the ideal structure superimposed upon them with a view to explanation. Now, these basal facts require a triple explanation, the psychological, which deals with the subjective 'causes' of sensations and sentiments, the physiological, which deals with their organic causes, and the physical, which deals with their objective causes. This triple explanation is to be applied to all kinds of sensation, to pleasure and pain, and to such sentiments as admiration, approval, respect, obligation, etc. Of the three inquiries the physical or objective is the most important, and within that field the vital problem is that of the "normal or specific agent." A visual sensation, for instance, may be aroused by a blow on the head, by pinching, pricking, or burning of the optic nerve, by chemical action, by an electric current, etc., but only when aroused by ether waves do visual sensations *play a useful rôle in the vital economy*, by giving us valuable information regarding distant objects. Ether waves then are the normal or specific agent of visual sensations. And in one field we know the normal agent of feelings of pleasure; we have in the theory of music, thinks the author, a mathematical description of the

characteristics of the air waves that excite harmonious sounds. If only we could obtain an equally objective account of the normal agents or the feelings of esthetic admiration and of moral approval, an account of the agents that arouse these feelings in us on occasions when they lead to notions and actions "useful to the vital economy," either of the individual or of society, then the problems of esthetics and ethics would be solved. The main purpose of the book is to show that the discovery and objective description of the normal agents in the fields of art and morals would solve all problems in these fields. In this opinion the author is no doubt largely right, and, moreover, he has given a good and fresh account of the problems that writers on esthetics and ethics have endeavored to solve. But it is not probable that the normal agents will ever be described in anything approaching mathematical or even very accurate terms, nor is it easy, either to discover what agents stir us to admiration and approval for the good of the vital economy of man or the state, or to attain to satisfactory conceptions of what 'vital economy' precisely means in either instance. In short, the author urges scientists to put forth all efforts to discover and give objective descriptions of the means that best serve the esthetic and the moral ends.

Incidentally there is not a little interesting matter in the book; discussions of the relations of the beautiful and the useful, of the esthetic theories of Taine and others of his day, of naturalism in art, of diversities and anomalies of taste, etc. And in the ethical half of the book the author sets down very wholesome ideas on such subjects as theological morality, love *vs.* passion, the value of modesty, the nude in art, the duty of man to woman, the freedom of the will, etc. The two concluding chapters give a "formula of happiness," and an "ethnological anthology," the latter a curious collection of pithy sayings on the general range of subjects earlier discussed.

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Le problème de la vie: Essai de sociologie générale. Par LOUIS BOURDEAU. Paris, Félix Alcan, 1901.—pp. xi, 372.

The author's plan is perhaps best indicated by the associated title *Essai de sociologie générale*. We might put the ideal thus: to construct a sociology, not only of the human group, but of the world-group (pp. i, ii), and then, from the ethics implied in such a cosmology, to deduce rules for a special case; that of human society (p. iii). Thus in Book I we start with the human individual, and making an analysis both of his body and of his mind, arrive at certain elements, "ether particles," the author calls them (pp. 39 ff.), endowed with a "rudiment of psychism . . . taking the power of motile sensibility which disposes them to realize certain groupings by an accord of their respective activities" (p. 74). In Book II we start again with the human individual, but now as an element in synthesis. Thus we rise to larger and larger groups, considering successively the symbiosis of human beings (ch. 1), of living being (ch. 2), of a planet (ch. 3), of the